

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 605

December 14, 1995, 5:18 p.m.
Page S-18616 Temp. Record

STATE DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION/Final Passage

SUBJECT: Foreign Relations Revitalization Act of 1995 . . . H.R. 1561. Final passage, as amended.

ACTION: BILL PASSED, 82-16

SYNOPSIS: As passed, H.R. 1561, the Foreign Relations Revitalization Act, will authorize appropriations for 4 years for the State Department and the functions of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (AID), the Agency for International Development (AID), and the United States Information Agency (USIA). Funding will be reduced over 5 years by \$1.7 billion, using fiscal year (FY) 1995 as the baseline. No more than 30 percent of this reduction will come from reductions in programs, and no more than 15 percent of the savings will come from reductions in State Department administrative accounts. The understanding is that a reduction of this magnitude will require the elimination of one or more of these three agencies and the transfer of their functions to the State Department. The President will have 6 months from the date of enactment of this bill to submit to Congress his plan for meeting this \$1.7 billion in savings. If this deadline is not met all three agencies will be abolished.

Other provisions include the following:

- visas will be denied to individuals: who are members of terrorist organizations; who have advocated terrorism; who have incited racial vilification; who have advocated the death of U.S. citizens or officials; or who have advocated the overthrow of the U.S. Government;
- funds authorized under this Act will not be used to promote the principle or doctrine of world government or one world citizenship;
- funding will be authorized for the National Endowment for Democracy;
- \$10 million of assessed contributions for the United Nations will be withheld until a report is submitted to Congress on overdue debts of foreign missions and diplomatic personnel to U.S. businesses and individuals (see vote No. 343);
- the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act will be extended; and
- the sale or transport of certain light weapons to Indonesia will be prohibited until human rights abuses by that country are stopped.

(See other side)

YEAS (82)				NAYS (16)		NOT VOTING (1)	
Republican (52 or 100%)		Democrats (30 or 65%)		Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (16 or 35%)	Republicans (1)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Hutchison	Akaka	Glenn		Biden	Gramm- ²	
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Baucus	Graham		Bumpers		
Bennett	Jeffords	Bingaman	Heflin		Dodd		
Bond	Kassebaum	Boxer	Hollings		Harkin		
Brown	Kempthorne	Bradley	Inouye		Johnston		
Burns	Kyl	Breaux	Kerrey		Kennedy		
Campbell	Lott	Bryan	Kerry		Lautenberg		
Chafee	Lugar	Byrd	Kohl		Leahy		
Coats	Mack	Conrad	Mikulski		Levin		
Cochran	McCain	Daschle	Nunn		Lieberman		
Cohen	McConnell	Dorgan	Pell		Moseley-Braun		
Coverdell	Murkowski	Exon	Pryor		Moynihan		
Craig	Nickles	Feingold	Robb		Murray		
D'Amato	Pressler	Feinstein	Rockefeller		Reid		
DeWine	Roth	Ford	Wellstone		Sarbanes		
Dole	Santorum				Simon		
Domenici	Shelby					EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE: 1—Official Business 2—Necessarily Absent 3—Illness 4—Other	
Faircloth	Simpson						
Frist	Smith						
Gorton	Snowe						
Grams	Specter					SYMBOLS: AY—Announced Yea AN—Announced Nay PY—Paired Yea PN—Paired Nay	
Grassley	Stevens						
Gregg	Thomas						
Hatch	Thompson						
Hatfield	Thurmond						
Helms	Warner						

The conference report will not bar United States' membership in the International Labor Organization, nor will it apply the "well-founded fear of persecution" standard for political asylum to individuals who are victims of forced abortion and sterilization policies (as introduced, the bill contained such a provision, which was primarily intended to grant asylum to women who were fleeing from communist China's forced abortion policies; the Clinton Administration policy is to force such women back into China).

Those favoring final passage contended:

The odyssey on this legislation started 6 months ago. The moment the bill reached the floor it was subjected to a filibuster. Now, due to the determined actions of the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, as well as to the willingness of the ranking Member to negotiate, a compromise has finally been reached that has ended the logjam. We are about to pass this bill to streamline the foreign policy bureaucracy, thereby improving its effectiveness and saving the American taxpayers \$1.7 billion over the next several years.

The basic purpose of the bill as originally proposed was to eliminate three independent foreign policy agencies--the Agency for International Development (AID), the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA)--and to consolidate their functions within the State Department. This proposal had the strong endorsement of five former Secretaries of State, who helped draft the text. It also had the support of the current Secretary of State (until the Vice President pulled him aside and explained to him why he was not to like it). For the State Department, the benefits are obvious. Consolidating functions in one agency will achieve administrative efficiencies, and, more importantly, will result in America speaking with one voice on foreign policy. America's interests are not served when the State Department advances one position, and then the USIA, AID, or the ACDA follows another policy. Speaking out of both sides of one's mouth may be acceptable when speaking in Congress, but when dealing with foreign nations it leads to confusion and mistrust.

Eliminating all 3 agencies would have saved \$3.66 billion over the next several years. The bureaucrats at these agencies were alarmed at the plan, though, and, in the words of one of them, their strategy became to "delay, postpone, obfuscate, and derail" the bill. They enlisted the Vice President in their efforts. Senators should keep in mind that Vice President Gore is constantly talking about his plans "to reinvent" government. They should also keep in mind that Vice President Gore just this January said that he had a plan to save \$5 billion in 5 years by cutting the U.S. international affairs budget. Of course, the local press applauded the Vice President for making this commitment, and of course they have not noticed that no plan has been forthcoming. The Administration has not even bothered to issue a State Department Reauthorization bill, leaving the matter entirely up to Congress. Continuing in this same vein, it is also interesting to note that no member of the press found it remarkable that Vice President Gore characterized this consolidation proposal that was drafted by 5 former Secretaries of State as jeopardizing the national interest because of the size of the cuts. Instead, they began a drumbeat of criticism against Republicans for daring to present such a bill to the Senate.

Over the ensuing months, most Democratic Members who opposed the bill and the Administration remained intransigent. They were determined to keep the bill from leaving the Senate. If the Senate killed it, the President would not have to veto it to stop it. His veto would probably be sustained, but the President would then be on record as opposing saving money by streamlining the foreign policy bureaucracy. However, Senator Kerry, though he opposed the bill, did not refuse to negotiate. Senator Helms and Senator Kerry bargained in good faith, and finally arrived at a compromise that ended the filibuster.

That compromise will demand a \$1.7 billion cut, most of which will not be allowed to come out of program spending or State Department administration. Though the bill will not specifically require the elimination of any agency, the understanding is that the size of the cut as well as the limits on where reductions will be made will necessitate the elimination of one or more of the 3 agencies originally targeted for elimination. The President will have the discretion to decide which agencies to eliminate.

Other compromise changes were also made to end the filibuster. For instance, the language that would give asylum to women fleeing coercive abortion and sterilization policies was dropped (though we hope it will be added back in conference). Also, language relating to Cuba was dropped because that language is being considered on the Cuban Liberty Act.

In order to prod Democrats into dropping their filibuster, the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee delayed action on select nominations and treaties that were of special interest to Democrats. The agreement ending the filibuster also included the requirement that those nominations be considered and approved, and that the treaties receive early consideration. Some Senators have suggested that the delaying tactics of the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee were unprecedented. Senator Dodd, for example, asserted at one point that it was the "height of irresponsibility to hold up nearly all other committee business over one piece of legislation." Unless Senator Dodd was suffering from a rather convenient amnesia, he should have known better than to have made such a statement. When he was chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere in 1992, he did not allow any nominations go forward for an entire year. In contrast, over the past 6 months the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee has acted on at least 58 of President Clinton's ambassadorial nominees, six tax treaties, and assorted other international treaties. Perhaps it may be reasonable to conclude that Democrats are not so concerned by the tactics, but by who is exercising them.

We are very pleased that this matter has finally been resolved. From the beginning we have been willing to compromise. While this bill is not all that we had hoped for, it is still very commendable, and we are pleased to vote in favor of final passage.

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Those opposing final passage contended:

The senior Senator from North Carolina is a consummate legislative craftsman. With remarkable tenacity, he has achieved his objective of bringing this bill to final passage. With that said, however, we must register our firm opposition both to the means and to the end that he pursued. On the first score, Senators are all aware that as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, he delayed full Senate consideration of dozens of ambassadorial nominees as well as the START II Treaty. This tactic caused consternation among the opponents of this bill who wished to prevent it from coming to a final vote, because they knew the damage that was being caused to the country by allowing ambassadorial posts around the world to sit vacant while the dispute on this bill continued, plus they knew the importance to the United States, and the world, of quick ratification of the START II Treaty. This tactic has worked--those of us who oppose this bill have relented rather than see further delay on these important matters. However, we hope other Senators of either party will never use the Chairman's strategy as a precedent for their own actions. The strategy is within the rules, but it is a destructive strategy that is damaging to the United States.

As for the ends that are being pursued, we agree that the Federal bureaucracy must be constantly scrutinized in order to find and eliminate redundancies, but this general principle does not apply to the specific three agencies that are the target of this bill. H.R. 1561's main purpose is to eliminate one or more of three independent foreign policy agencies: the Agency for International Development; the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; and the United States Information Agency. All three of these agencies have been streamlined in recent years. Further reductions will not increase efficiency; they will harm these missions.

The tactics that were used to win passage of this bill are unfortunate, and the result of enactment of this bill will be to damage the United States' foreign policy agencies. For these two reasons, we urge the rejection of this bill.